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New York

Chairman: Mr. Valencia Rodriguez . . . . . (Ecuador)

The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

Agenda items 53 to 66, 68 to 72 and 153 (*continued*)

General debate on all disarmament and international security items

Mr. Wyzner (Poland): I should like to join other speakers in extending warm congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, on your election, and to pledge to you our full cooperation. With your experience and expertise, and with the able assistance of the other officers of the First Committee, I am confident that you will lead us successfully through our important deliberations.

I should also like to express my deep appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador von Wagner of Germany, for his dedication to, and efforts in, revitalizing the work of the First Committee. And, if I may add a personal note, it gives me particular pleasure to appear again in the friendly environment of the First Committee as a representative of my country after years of service as an Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations.

My delegation has listened very carefully to the general debate in the General Assembly, which closed last week. Speaker after speaker voiced their assessments, hopes and fears with regard to current international developments. Disarmament on a global scale attracted the attention of many States. This reflected the importance the international community attaches to this issue.

The disarmament and arms-control process will continue to contribute to the strengthening of international security as long as military threats to security exist. In order to make such a contribution as effective and valuable as possible, one has first of all to consider the nature and scope of these threats.

Traditional arms control requires redefinition to include security cooperation extending to a whole spectrum of issues, embracing both new challenges and the legacy of the cold war.

Unfortunately, that legacy is still present: enormous quantities of weapons, now redundant, are available for sale or transfer. A still-powerful military machine can influence political choices and decisions. The problem of conversion is much more complicated than we originally thought. Scientific and technological assets require safe redeployment; fissionable materials require careful control. The danger of nuclear proliferation is accompanied by the danger of nuclear pollution.

New challenges involving military security stem first of all from regional conflicts, whose root causes have been overshadowed in the past by the bipolar division of the world and by ideological confrontation. Speaking in general terms, one may conclude that although a global military conflict is far less probable now, at the same time military conflicts limited in scope pose a new and difficult challenge.

The focus in the global arms-control process must thus be adjusted accordingly and complemented and reinforced by regional undertakings. In line with the trend in political relations, it must also be more of a cooperative, and not just of a restrictive, nature.

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The end of the cold war opened the way for unparalleled cooperation and progress across the range of disarmament issues, but it has also unleashed new threats of weapons proliferation. Bearing in mind the changing nature and scale of military threats to security, we need to recognize the fact that disarmament and arms control alone cannot provide for security, which is multidimensional in character. However, disarmament and arms control can reduce the risk of an outbreak of military conflict, raise the level of confidence and provide a better basis for progress in other aspects of security. We need to look at our disarmament agenda with these points in mind. It is therefore the notion of conflict prevention, based on the comprehensive concept of security, which has to provide a conceptual framework and guiding principles for the development of arms control and disarmament.

All in all, the disarmament process has been on track, although it has not yet developed as dynamically as one could wish. We expect that disarmament measures, both those already agreed to and those for which we are still striving, will contribute to the strengthening of global security and to the stability of all regions, including our own, Europe. Poland naturally pays particular attention to the development of regional and subregional cooperation in Europe, both bilaterally and within the framework of the Visegrad Group, the Group of Baltic States and the Central European Initiative. Within this framework and as an active member of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Poland is working towards the establishment of a system that would provide security to all European countries. In this context, joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and achieving full membership in the European Union and Western European Union remain our priorities.

The Polish delegation welcomes the outcome of this year's session of the Conference on Disarmament, particularly the encouraging results of the negotiations on the comprehensive test-ban treaty. The progress reported in this respect was possible because of the political will, determination and constructive cooperation of all members of the Conference.

Much of the credit for this accomplishment goes to Ambassador Marín Bosch of Mexico, the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, and to the Chairmen of its two Working Groups. The results of the ensuing negotiations represent a good basis on which to pursue the goal of a universal, multilateral and effectively verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. As a result, the international community stands the chance, long overdue, of securing a good treaty.

We are confident that given the envisaged inter-sessional work, the Conference on Disarmament will be well prepared in 1995 to proceed to intensive, systematic and purpose-oriented negotiations to produce a broadly supported draft comprehensive test-ban treaty as soon as possible. Poland is determined to make a constructive contribution to this end. We lend our full support to the recommendation contained in the report of the Conference on Disarmament that the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban be reestablished at the outset of the 1995 session of the Conference with its present negotiating mandate. Let me add that in view of the significance we attach to this question, my delegation wishes to reserve its right to comment at greater length on the negotiating process with regard to the comprehensive test-ban treaty at a later stage of our debate.

We find it disappointing that, notwithstanding General Assembly resolution 48/75 L on the prohibition of production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear devices — which was adopted by consensus — the Conference on Disarmament has failed to sustain and to follow up on the consensus. While members of the Conference were unanimous in their agreement that the Conference was indeed the appropriate forum in which to negotiate such a treaty, and while there was agreement in principle that an ad hoc committee should be established in that respect, the inflexibility of some Conference members concerning the mandate of such a body has unfortunately proved insurmountable.

We support efforts to work out the mandate for negotiations on the prohibition of production of fissionable material for military purposes. On the basis of the consensus resolution 48/75 L, the Conference on Disarmament constitutes the right framework for such negotiations. We believe that a non-discriminatory, multilateral, internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices would be an important factor in the international security structure. In synergistic combination with the comprehensive test-ban treaty, it would contribute greatly to consolidating the global non-proliferation regime, with important implications for nuclear disarmament and related areas.

The international community has recently been alarmed by numerous incidents of illicit trafficking in nuclear materials. All these incidents have been small in

scale, and the confiscated nuclear material did not necessarily originate from stockpiles of nuclear weapons. However, the frequency of these incidents and the risks associated with them should compel the international community to take up coordinated efforts to eliminate such occurrences. As Poland's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Andrzej Olechowski, emphasized in his statement to the General Assembly on 27 September 1994, illicit trafficking in nuclear materials "is a threat to international security and also a danger to bystanders exposed to radiation". There have recently been intensive international discussions, coordinated by Mr. Hans Blix, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), concerning this objective, and I understand the Secretary-General and Mr. Blix met this morning to discuss these issues. In this connection, we fully support the plans of IAEA to intensify assistance to its member States in this domain and to examine new options for the verification and analysis of reported incidents of illicit trafficking and for enhanced physical protection. In the light of that examination, the international community should determine whether the existing international legal regime in question requires further strengthening. Its thorough review seems timely.

As a country bordering regions where nuclear arms are stored, Poland has a direct interest in a satisfactory international arrangement governing security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. We believe that such assurances are reasonably expected by those who have solemnly forsworn the nuclear option and who comply with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) or other comparable, internationally binding agreements.

We hope, therefore, that the Conference on Disarmament will eventually be able to reach a satisfactory solution of the question of effective international arrangements to protect non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. In particular, we have high hopes for the ongoing consultations among nuclear-weapon States on possible security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States. It cannot be denied that enhancing confidence of the non-nuclear-weapon States about their security would go a long way towards the creation of a much more favourable environment in the progress towards global disarmament and the strengthening of the nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Our country has actively participated in the preparatory process for the 1995 Conference on the review and extension of the NPT. Judging by the progress made so far, we believe it is realistic to expect a timely solution to all the outstanding problems related to the Conference. Poland is among those States parties that stand for an indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT, which would strengthen its impact as a mainstay of the non-proliferation regime and a major factor in international security. In our view, nothing less should be expected from the review and extension Conference next April. Its final outcome must not be regarded in terms of a trade-off or favour rendered by one group of States to another.

By indefinitely extending the NPT, mankind would be doing itself a favour. This would also, in our view, provide the necessary basis for further progress in nuclear disarmament and for unobstructed cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Of course, as is clear from our references to the ongoing international negotiations in the field of arms control, we hope that the extension of the Treaty will take place against the background of continuing meaningful progress in nuclear disarmament, in accordance with the preamble and article VI of the Treaty.

The report of the Conference on Disarmament shows that little progress was made in 1994 on the issue of preventing an arms race in outer space. We are certainly among those who believe that with the demise of the cold war, this issue has lost its sharp edge. Yet we firmly believe that one worthwhile area that could be usefully explored by the Conference on Disarmament is that of confidence-building in relation to the activities of States in outer space. By enhancing transparency, confidence and especially security, such confidence-building measures as space-launch notifications and "rules of the road" in orbit could be usefully pursued.

Poland supported and became one of the original sponsors of the resolution establishing the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. We also support the gradual expansion of the scope of the Register. Poland attaches great importance to the question of transparency in armaments, which has been demonstrated, *inter alia*, by comprehensive and timely submissions to the first and the second annual Register. Such action enhances confidence, eases tensions and promotes regional and global security.

Poland has all along advocated the further expansion of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms as a premise for its universalization, which is indispensable. This purpose, in our view, would be served, *inter alia*, by a voluntary exchange of data on military holdings and procurement through national production. Combined with the conventional arms transfers, it would go a long way towards the more balanced and non-discriminatory instrument we seek.

Two years ago, the adoption of the chemical weapons Convention was heralded as a remarkable achievement of the Conference on Disarmament. Active preparations for the entry into force of the Convention and its implementation are taking place in the framework of the Preparatory Commission. A great deal of useful work has already been done. We have noticed, however, that the pace of the work is losing its momentum. As the Secretary-General appealed to us yesterday, we should not permit this. We are so close to transforming words into deeds by starting the actual process of completely eliminating chemical weapons from the Earth.

It is our firm view that the early entry into force of the Convention is in the best interest of all. We are fully committed to this goal. Last year, for instance, Poland organized a regional seminar on national implementation measures for countries of Central and Eastern Europe. We have concluded governmental procedures and have submitted a proposal for the ratification of the Convention to the Parliament. We hope that Poland will soon join those States which have already ratified the Convention.

For years this body has played an active role in encouraging the Conference on Disarmament to finalize negotiations on the chemical weapons Convention. It should continue this role by promoting its early entry into force. For this reason, Poland, together with Canada, our traditional co-sponsor, is working on a draft resolution on this subject, which we expect to submit to the Committee shortly.

A smooth commencement of the effective implementation of the Convention and of the work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons will provide, we believe, useful guidance for other areas of disarmament and a valuable testing ground. I have in mind in particular the biological weapons Convention and the recently concluded special conference to consider the report of the Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts to identify and examine potential verification measures from a scientific and technical standpoint. Poland welcomes the decision of the Conference to consider appropriate measures, including possible verification measures, and to draft proposals for strengthening the Convention. Like other countries, we share the view that the lack of an effective verification mechanism is obviously a serious deficiency of the biological weapons Convention. The complex nature of different aspects of such a verification regime calls for a proper balance between sometimes conflicting requirements: intrusiveness and the protection of confidential information being just one obvious example.

In the meantime, we should not lose anything of the positive achievements collected so far in the process of implementation of a set of confidence-building measures in this area. Apart from playing an independent role in increasing the transparency of activities relevant from the point of view of the biological weapons Convention, these measures can also be regarded as an invaluable trial exercise in preparation for the future verification regime. A critical analysis of returns shows that there is still room for improvement in these measures, in particular in terms of a level of participation, but equally from the point of view of a common interpretation of what is to be reported.

We should not fail to mention yet another area closely related to disarmament efforts: international humanitarian law, and especially the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. The experiences of recent years has made it manifestly clear that this Convention is inadequate.

Poland attaches particular importance to the issue of land-mines, an issue of truly global character. We firmly support a speedy solution to the problem of anti-personnel land-mines laid down throughout the entire planet. The knowledge that hundreds of innocent victims are being killed or maimed every week by these deadly "seeds of war" will not permit us to give up the struggle — and time is not on our side.

The Polish people know perfectly well the deadly effects of mines and the price to be paid for mine clearance. About 90 million unexploded munitions, mainly land-mines, had to be destroyed on our territory after the Second World War. An additional aspect of this deadly legacy relates to incidents with land-mines involving international personnel serving in peace-keeping operations. Our Government is fully aware of the high risk to which United Nations Blue Helmets, including hundreds of Polish peace-keepers, are increasingly exposed.

It is our sincere hope that next year's first Review Conference of the 1980 Convention on inhuman weapons will strengthen the regime of its Protocol II on land-mines and provide a basis for a more nearly universal application of the Convention. Poland was among the sponsors of last year's General Assembly resolution 48/75 K on a moratorium on the export of land-mines. Consequently, we maintain a policy of restraint in exporting these deadly items. The process of introducing relevant national legal regulations is already under way in my country.

Finally, on the issue of the composition of the Conference on Disarmament, Poland takes the position that it would be in the best interests of the future efficiency and credibility of the Conference if the stalemate over the expansion of its membership were no longer allowed to continue. Poland is hopeful that a breakthrough in that regard will prove possible at an early stage of the 1995 session.

In my brief statement I have touched upon only a few disarmament issues. This debate has demonstrated how rich the disarmament agenda is and will remain for the immediate future. We should approach it with resolve and a sense of priority. May I express my delegation's confidence that, together, we will spare no effort to use the opportunity created by a new international environment for the advancement of the cause of disarmament and arms control and for the sake of international peace and security on both the global and the regional scale.

Mr. Türk (Slovenia): Let me congratulate you, Sir, and other members of the Bureau on your election. We are convinced that your abilities and expertise guarantee a successful continuation of the work of the First Committee. Allow me, too, to take this opportunity to pay tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador von Wagner, for his outstanding performance during the forty-eighth session of the General Assembly.

In recent years, we have witnessed remarkable activity in the mechanisms for maintaining international peace and security. Furthermore, the restoration of democracy in much of the world, accompanied by an overwhelming awareness of shared responsibility for global security, has laid new foundations for a more efficient management of international security issues.

However, the current international security environment is far from being entirely satisfactory. Some conflicts, inherited from the past, still persist. In addition, the security situation in many parts of the world has deteriorated, owing to more recent outbursts of hostilities. The ratio between the number of new or continuing conflicts and that of successfully prevented or resolved ones remains disturbing. This indicates that further efforts need to be made towards finding improved ways of preventing and resolving conflicts.

Preventive diplomacy is certainly one of the tools which could have been utilized more often and with greater effect. Its potential, deriving from the non-coercive nature of its methods, has been far from exhausted. In principle, preventive action should be taken prior to the deterioration of a given situation into an open dispute and long before it becomes a situation involving a threat to international peace and security. Only in these circumstances can such action be successful. The role of the Secretary-General and of the Security Council should be developed further in this domain.

Among other United Nations organs, the General Assembly should be able to address situations which may impair the general welfare of or friendly relations among nations and to recommend appropriate measures for their peaceful adjustment. Thus, circumstances would be created to prevent such situations from evolving into open disputes or conflicts. Successful preventive action could thereby significantly reduce the number of situations which would otherwise require a coercive approach. It would also relieve the growing pressure on the limited resources of the United Nations.

Regional security mechanisms and cooperation between regional arrangements and the United Nations represent other possibilities for strengthening international security which should be developed beyond their present scope. Slovenia has been participating actively in the development of the mechanisms of cooperative security within our region, Europe, and in particular within the framework of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. It is our firm conviction that regional security arrangements, including confidence-building and disarmament arrangements, are an important integral part of comprehensive global security. In this connection, Slovenia emphasizes the importance of the guidelines and recommendations for regional approaches to disarmament within the context of global security adopted by the Disarmament Commission last year and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 48/75 G of 16 December 1993. In particular, we emphasize the practical relevance of such principles as that requiring regional arrangements to be freely agreed upon by the participating States. Furthermore, the region to which the arrangements among them apply should be defined appropriately, taking into account its specific conditions and characteristics.

Slovenia is aware of the security needs of contemporary Europe. We are convinced that the full integration of Slovenia in the existing regional security structures in Europe would contribute significantly to fulfilling these needs. It would increase the level of regional security and consolidate the area of stability. Slovenia has already joined the Partnership for Peace programme with a view to becoming a member of the

North Atlantic Treaty Organization. In the course of strengthening our ties with the European Union, we wish to obtain as early as possible the status of associate member of the Western European Union. The early integration of Slovenia into these structures will represent a contribution to the overall strengthening of security in Europe and, consequently, to global security.

Turning to the disarmament questions, I wish to address first the issue of conventional weapons. International action in the field of conventional arms has to be further intensified. While the continuing existence of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction poses the most serious threat to mankind, we should not neglect the growing threat of the ever-more sophisticated conventional weapons. Decisive steps should be taken to reduce the human suffering caused by the use of certain categories of these weapons.

In this regard, Slovenia strongly supports the existing moratoria on the export of anti-personnel land-mines. Furthermore, we are willing to cooperate with other interested delegations in pursuit of the initiative presented by the United States to conclude an agreement on reducing the number and availability of anti-personnel land-mines with a view to their eventual elimination. The international community has to pool its resources in order to eliminate the threat posed to the civilian population by mines and other unexploded devices, especially after the end of armed conflicts.

One of the major achievements in the area of global security is undoubtedly the creation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. As a step towards greater transparency in armaments it represents an important and precious contribution to confidence-building on a global scale. However, we should not refrain from making it into an ever more reliable instrument. This could be achieved by enhancing the reporting system and by expanding its inventory. We believe that it should include procurement through national production and that adequate steps should be taken to ensure universal and comprehensive reporting. Such reporting would most likely be greatly encouraged if appropriate verification measures were to be introduced.

The present session of the General Assembly is taking place at a time of intensive preparations for the 1995 Conference of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). On numerous occasions, Slovenia has expressed its conviction that the NPT should be extended indefinitely and unconditionally.

It is widely acknowledged that, in parallel, substantial progress in negotiations for a comprehensive nuclear test ban and concrete steps to ensure effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapons States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons would greatly contribute to the positive outcome of the 1995 NPT Conference.

We support the initiatives for the negotiation of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. In this regard, we commend Mr. Hans Blix, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for the establishment of a working group within the IAEA secretariat to examine the verification arrangements for such a treaty.

International efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation may also be threatened by the illicit trafficking in nuclear material. We welcome the initiative to examine the options available for strengthening the role of the IAEA in improving the control, supervision and physical protection of such material.

No efforts should be spared to strengthen the endeavours with a view to complete nuclear disarmament. We appreciate the recent agreement between the United States and the Russian Federation to accelerate the mutual reduction of stocks of nuclear weapons. In addition, we support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, wherever possible, as they clearly represent an efficient and practical way to achieve nuclear disarmament.

As a result of developments in recent years, the ultimate goal — the elimination of weapons of mass destruction — seems to be closer. The chemical weapons Convention has an unprecedented number of States signatories and the number of ratifications is steadily increasing. Slovenia is determined to ratify this Convention at the earliest possible date.

With the recent establishment of an ad hoc group to strengthen the biological weapons Convention, revived international activities seem to encompass all the aspects of the process of the elimination of weapons of mass destruction. In order to proceed smoothly along this path, the United Nations should promote further cooperation among Member States in its organs and, especially, in the work of the Conference on Disarmament. In this connection, we wish to associate ourselves with the initiatives for the expansion of the membership of the Conference on Disarmament. We believe that the most

appropriate solution to this issue would be the inclusion of all interested peaceful States as full members. We welcome the support given to this approach by the European Union in its statement yesterday.

Let me conclude this statement with a few more remarks regarding a specific situation which demonstrates the inherent link between security and disarmament issues. Military conflicts and political tensions which involve several States in the Balkans created the need for steps to be taken to end the conflicts and to develop appropriate measures for post-conflict confidence-building. The continued war in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the precarious situation in parts of Croatia are the most acute examples of the many aspects of the problem and must be addressed urgently.

First of all, the parties directly or indirectly involved in the armed conflicts must be persuaded to negotiate with a view to the definitive cessation of hostilities. After putting an end to hostilities, these negotiations should include confidence- and security-building measures, the reduction of armaments, a decrease in armed forces, the disbandment and/or subordination of paramilitary forces and demobilization. These objectives should be an integral part of the peace plan.

The successful conclusion of this first phase would create the necessary conditions for the second phase of negotiations, when the States in the immediate vicinity of an area of conflict, and other States concerned, would join the participants of the first phase and assist them in concluding arrangements for comprehensive arms limitation and the reduction of armed forces. This second phase could also include additional confidence- and security-building measures to be taken by all participating States.

This is just one example of a situation involving a clear need for a combination of diplomatic efforts to end a military conflict on the one hand and of disarmament and confidence-building measures on the other.

We have addressed several security and disarmament issues which figure prominently on the international agenda. We believe that the General Assembly has an important contribution to make with regard to all of them and that the current debate in the First Committee is especially important in this context.

Mr. Gorita (Romania): Let me first, on behalf of the delegation of Romania, congratulate the Chairman wholeheartedly on his election to steer the work of the First Committee. Our congratulations go also to the other members of the Bureau. I would like to use this opportunity also to pay tribute to the Chairman's predecessor, Ambassador von Wagner, especially for his efforts with a view to the rationalization of the work of the Committee.

There have been profound changes in the international political environment in the last five years. With the radical changes in Eastern Europe, more than four decades of adverse ideological and military competition between East and West came to an end, thus creating unprecedented opportunities for substantive progress in security, arms control and disarmament. Substantial progress has been made on various long-standing issues, particularly with regard to the reduction of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction.

The successful implementation of the Treaty between the United States of America and the Soviet Union on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Nuclear Forces, and other initiatives such as the reduction and dismantling of tactical nuclear weapons, and strategic-arms-reduction agreements, including START I and START II, represent significant contributions to halting the spread of nuclear arms. The trilateral agreement signed last January between the United States, the Russian Federation and Ukraine provided, *inter alia*, for the elimination of all nuclear weapons located in Ukraine. The conclusion last year of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction was a tremendous success for the multilateral negotiating efforts of the Geneva-based Conference on Disarmament.

The renunciation of the use of force and the full-scale operation of the system of collective security seem to be closer to implementation than ever. The revival of the United Nations in keeping with its natural vocation as defined by the Charter, the increasing roles of the General Assembly and, especially, of the Security Council, and the strengthening of regional structures appear to confirm the growing ascendancy of political over military factors.

Romania supports firmly the strengthening of the United Nations and the multilateral system for the safeguarding of peace world wide. The United Nations and regional institutions have a decisive role to play, especially in preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention, and in promoting respect for human rights and the rule of law and closer cooperation among regions.

In Europe, the shape of a new security architecture is developing on the basis of freedom and stability. Confidence-building measures have greatly contributed to the reduction of offensive and destabilizing military capabilities and have paved the way for new cooperative approaches towards security. The Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) provides valuable forums for security cooperation and preventive diplomacy. Along those lines, the 1992 Treaty on Open Skies contributes to regional stability, while the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe establishes a new military balance at a substantially lower level of armaments. The profound changes in this part of the world, where confrontation was most sharp in the past, are also illustrated by the newly created North Atlantic Cooperation Council and the Partnership for Peace programme of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), in which my country is playing an active part. The European Union and the Western European Union are expanding in both membership and scope. Through their cooperation and interaction and in continuous dialogue with the United Nations, the CSCE, NATO and the Western European Union are developing the network of a cooperative regional security system.

We also see similar significant tendencies and developments in other regions of the world, and we welcome them. Last summer's meeting in Bangkok of the Regional Forum of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) was of historic significance, and established a framework of political and security dialogue and confidence building in the Asia-Pacific region. A treaty on an African nuclear-weapon-free zone is being finalized, and it appears that the Treaty banning nuclear weapons in Latin America — the Treaty of Tlatelolco — will enter into force soon. The peace process in the Middle East has entered a new, higher stage.

Despite these encouraging results, we cannot ignore the persistence and even the exacerbation of situations which threaten international security. The tragedy in Bosnia and Herzegovina is but one example. The post-cold-war situation is characterized by potential regional arms races and by the accumulation of ever more destructive weaponry by a growing number of countries. Regional instabilities, the emergence of ethnic and religious tensions and the risk of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and of conventional arms have created a real challenge to international stability, rendering disarmament and arms control more urgent and necessary than ever. Because, as the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, rightly said in his introductory statement, disarmament and arms controls are an integral part of security.

The year 1995 will witness three major events in the field of non-proliferation. The review and extension Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) will be held; the chemical weapons Convention will very probably enter into force; and the biological weapons Convention will again come under scrutiny, by the new negotiating body for the setting up of a verification regime.

Six months from now, the representatives of almost 170 Governments will meet here to decide the fate of the non-proliferation Treaty, an international instrument that has been hailed as the most important pact of the nuclear era, and the cornerstone and the main pillar of the non-proliferation regime that has been carefully built up over the years. The 1995 NPT conference will be a moment of truth, when nations will have to make a fundamental political decision. The only reasonable decision must be in the direction of strengthening the non-proliferation regime. Romania stands firmly for the indefinite and unconditional extension of the NPT. Such an extension would put a permanent stop to the further spread of nuclear weapons, sending a clear warning to all those who might think of acquiring them.

The Conference should be a forum for joint efforts to obtain both the indefinite extension of the Treaty and its universality, thereby ensuring the promotion of nuclear disarmament and cooperation for the peaceful use of nuclear energy, the strengthening of the verification regime and the security of non-nuclear-weapon States. A treaty of unlimited duration would provide additional assurances of international stability and security, and, under the safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), would permit continued international trade and cooperation for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and nuclear technology.

We are now in the final stage of the preparatory process for the 1995 Conference. However, much work remains to be done. My delegation would like to see a rapid resolution of the remaining organizational and procedural issues, since appropriate and timely preparation of the 1995 Conference is the key to the successful conclusion of the review and extension process itself.

Complementary to nuclear non-proliferation are the conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban treaty, arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against

the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and the cut-off of production of fissile materials.

Resolution 48/70, on a comprehensive test-ban treaty, adopted at the last session of the General Assembly, made it clear that the whole international community favoured the early conclusion of such a treaty in order to contribute effectively to the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to the process of nuclear disarmament.

This year, the Conference on Disarmament focused its work on the negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. Romania welcomes the substantial progress made so far and hopes that, both here and in Geneva, we will use all available time for inter-sessional work to prepare the ground for successful negotiations during the next session.

As we have repeatedly stated in the Conference on Disarmament and other forums, Romania seeks an universal and multilaterally and effectively verifiable comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty. Its verification regime should be international in character and cost-effective, and should offer a baseline capacity to monitor compliance with the provisions of the treaty on a global scale.

The issue of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons has been a subject of extensive deliberations at the Conference on Disarmament. Efforts in this direction have to continue so that an arrangement can be reached to complement the benefits of an indefinite extension of the NPT and an effective comprehensive test-ban treaty. Such an arrangement should essentially offer universal and legally binding negative, as well as positive, security assurances that are global in scope, uniform and comprehensive. The search for a solution should not leave the United Nations aside, and we favour the idea of a Security Council confirmation, on a broader basis, of the commitments which were originally undertaken by three nuclear-weapon States in Security Council resolution 255 (1968).

The Conference on Disarmament also has to begin negotiations as quickly as possible for the conclusion of a treaty banning the production of fissile materials for explosive nuclear devices.

The conclusion of the negotiations on the chemical weapons Convention was a major success of multilateral disarmament diplomacy. This Convention is generally recognized as the first truly verifiable global disarmament agreement, with a uniquely comprehensive and effective verification regime covering military and non-military facilities. It is in this spirit that the Romanian parliament has initiated the process of ratification of the chemical weapons Convention, and we are confident that my country will be among the first 65 States parties to this agreement.

Over the last two years we have achieved some positive results in improving and strengthening the regime under the 1972 biological weapons Convention. Romania submitted the required data, according to the letter and the spirit of that Convention, for improved confidence-building measures. There is, however, a clear distinction between confidence-building and verification. Romania therefore supported the decision taken by the 1991 Third Review Conference of the biological weapons Convention to establish an Ad Hoc Group of Governmental Experts to identify and examine potential verification measures from a scientific and technical standpoint (VEREX). The Romanian experts took an active part in the work of VEREX, which was successfully accomplished a year ago by the adoption of a consensus report, recommending *inter alia*, some of the potential verification measures for strengthening the effectiveness and improving the implementation of the Convention. We welcome the successful outcome of the recent Review Conference of the States parties to the biological weapons Convention, and we will actively participate in the work of the Ad Hoc Group established by the Conference to consider appropriate measures, including a possible verification regime, to be included, as appropriate, in a legally binding instrument.

Before concluding, let me say a few words about transparency as a means to promote confidence-building among States and to advance disarmament. An important step towards increased transparency was achieved through the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. From the first year my country submitted data for inclusion in the Register and favours its further development, to make it comprehensive, balanced and conducive to universal participation.

Romania also believes that proper attention should be paid to the proposal for a code of conduct in international transfers of conventional arms, aimed at furthering the debate on measures to deal with excessive and destabilizing accumulations of weapons. Such a code could increase openness and transparency in this field by establishing, as a voluntary confidence-building measure, universal and non-discriminatory principles and criteria to be followed by subscribing States in considering arms transfers. A proposal to this effect, submitted by Romania in the Conference on

Disarmament, was welcomed by many delegations, which considered it a potential contribution to the strengthening of confidence and understanding among States and advocated commencement of substantive negotiations on, and the drafting of, such a code. It is my delegation's firm belief that, despite the fact that we have yet a long way to go, such a code of conduct could establish viable universal and non-discriminatory principles and criteria for the regulation of arms transfers, which could significantly help to limit the potential growth of regional tension and to increase stability.

Mr. Samhan (United Arab Emirates) (*interpretation from Arabic*): On behalf of the United Arab Emirates, I am pleased to congratulate you, Sir, on your election to the chairmanship of the First Committee. I am confident that your experience in this field will contribute to the success of the Committee's deliberations. I also wish to congratulate the other members of the Bureau and to wish them every success.

Despite the developments that have taken place on the international arena and the optimism generated by positive international changes since the end of the cold war, and by the participation of the United Nations in peace efforts, in addition to the partial achievements in the field of international security and disarmament, there have emerged new situations that threaten international peace and security, such as increasing national and regional armed conflicts, violations of human rights, ethnic conflicts, and the widening economic and social gaps between developed and developing countries. It is clear that such situations are not conducive to the creation of a sound international environment of peaceful coexistence, mutual respect, peace and security. In this context, we wish to stress the fact that in order for us to address these phenomena and deal with these situations, we have to adopt a new approach that could enable us to overcome them in the interest of all humanity.

The new international order, which advocates ridding the world of all nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction must be founded on the principles of peaceful coexistence, the prohibition of the use of or threat of force, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and respect for each State's right to choose its our path of development, in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations. The report of the Secretary-General on the New dimensions of arms regulation and disarmament in the post-cold-war era (A/C.1/47/7) has contributed to the exploration of means of promoting international machinery to achieve disarmament and of adapting such machinery to new international realities.

In this regard, we wish to stress the importance of adequate interaction between the different elements of such machinery. Disarmament should be the focus of interest on the part of every State and should be pursued in a manner that serves regional and international peace and security. We also wish to stress the need for the Security Council and the General Assembly to play a positive and effective role in his discussion, in accordance with the United Nations Charter.

My delegation concurs with the call for expanding the membership of the Conference on Disarmament, and for the selection of members on a basis of objectivity and transparency. Representation in the Conference must be universal so that due account may be taken of the concerns of all Members and States of the world.

Universal disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction at the international level are two extremely urgent matters if the world is to rid itself of the remaining residues of the cold war and achieve global peace and security. In this regard, we attach great importance to ensuring the success of the forthcoming Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) scheduled for 1995. The recent voluntary halting of nuclear tests by some nuclear-weapon States is a positive step. We hope that other States that possess such weapons will follow suit.

The State of the United Arab Emirates firmly believes that the issues of peace, security, disarmament and the settlement of disputes and conflicts must be based on a number of cardinal principles, namely peaceful coexistence; non-interference in the internal affairs of States; non-use or threat of use of force as a means of solving disputes and conflicts; the rejection of hegemony, occupation and expansionism; emphasis on the right of each State to sovereignty, independence, respect for its political system and economic and social development in accordance with its development plans and aspirations; and the right of States to safeguard and preserve their natural resources. These are the principles that we abide by in our bilateral, regional and international relations, in consonance with the United Nations Charter and the rules of international law.

Proceeding from these principles, concepts and goals and with a view to ensuring the stability and security that the Gulf region, more than any other region of the world, stands in need of, in view of the wars and conflicts that

took place there over the past two decades, the use, in the course of those conflicts, of various kinds of weapons of mass destruction, and the resultant grave consequences for social and economic development and the environment, the United Arab Emirates, together with sister States in the Gulf Cooperation Council, has called for the resolution of problems and conflicts through dialogue and by peaceful means and had called for strengthening cooperation between the States of the region at both the bilateral and the collective levels in keeping with the principles of peaceful coexistence and good-neighbourliness. The aim is to rebuild confidence and to lay a firm foundation that would guarantee peace and security in the region.

One of the important issues with which the international community must deal, is the problem of mines and other explosive devices in many parts of the world, particularly in the Gulf region. Our territorial waters and the coasts of our islands are still plagued by the legacy of the Iraq-Iran war and the war for the liberation of Kuwait. Mines constitute a danger to people living in the region and to international marine navigation. My delegation is of the view that remedying this situation is a joint international humanitarian responsibility that should be discharged within the framework of dealing with the problems of disarmament and international security.

The United Arab Emirates supports the view that the United Nations, and its specialized agencies as well as regional organizations must have a significant and effective role to play in the field of disarmament, at the regional level. This requires special support from the States that possess nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction. My country has always supported peace and the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in various parts of the world, including the Middle East region, as this would help create conditions that favour the achievement of sustainable development lasting peace and stability.

In this connection, we call upon Israel, as a State that possess nuclear weapons, to accede to the NPT and to subject all its nuclear facilities to the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in accordance with Security Council resolution 487 (1981) and in harmony with the current peace process in the region.

We attach special importance to the question of enabling the Disarmament Commission to focus its attention on the main and significant items relating to international peace and security and to put forward practical proposals thereon. The Conference on Disarmament should deal with other important matters, such as the confidence-building measures necessary for maintaining peace, as well as stability and regional security arrangements. In addition, organizational structures of the Conference on Disarmament must be adjusted to the new realities of the world.

With the forthcoming fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, the Organization should face up to the challenge of transforming the world into a world of genuine international peace and security.

In this context, we support the call for rationalizing the work of the First Committee and revising its agenda, as well as for taking into account the need for according special attention to the rules and principles that would effectively promote international peace and security. In this regard, we call also for the settlement of disputes by peaceful means — in observance of the principle enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in the norms of international law.

The effects of an unchecked international or regional arms race and the exorbitant price such a race extracts in the form of military outlays, not only threaten international peace and security, but also by a tremendous burden that causes a massive haemorrhage which drains national economic and financial resources, particularly in the developing countries. Consequently, the striving by those countries after disarmament and the resultant reduction of military expenditures would enable them to rechannel their resources and to dedicate and harness their capabilities to the achievement of social and economic development and the strengthening of international and regional peace and security; while we are aware of the fact that regional problems and disputes have their special geographic, political, social, and security characteristics, we also realize that achievement of final solutions to these problems requires the existence of political will and the building of confidence between States, particularly neighbouring States, as well as the development of mechanisms of peaceful settlement of international and regional disputes and conflicts.

In this connection, I wish to refer to the need to promote the role and the work of the International Court of Justice so that it may contribute to the settlement of disputes between States.

In our view, such practice and measure represent the real means of relaxing the tensions that arise from disputes and friction between States and resolving such disputes by peaceful means and not by the use or threat of the use of force or of weapons of mass destruction. This measure will

effectively contribute to creating a sound international environment, that is free from threats and risks, an environment of disarmament, development, security and stability.

Mr. Camacho Omiste (Bolivia) *(interpretation from Spanish)*: Mr. Chairman, the Bolivian delegation is pleased indeed to see you presiding over the work of the First Committee. We would also like to express our thanks and appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Adolf Ritter von Wagner.

The end of the cold war has restored the hope of mankind that we may be able to live in peace and has committee to the United Nations the historic challenge to lay the foundation for a new century free from the threat of nuclear weapons.

As Members of the United Nations we have the duty to assume a real commitment to bring about total nuclear disarmament through the adoption of legal obligations — not first through speeches and declarations.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has proved to be a basic instrument in our efforts to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Bolivia gives its full support to ensuring the attainment of its final objective.

In our overall consideration of disarmament, special significance attaches to the nuclear-test-ban Treaty. If this agreement is to be effective, it must be universally applicable and unquestionably verifiable. Its existence will without question constitute an essential element in disarmament.

Bolivia hopes also that further progress will be made in the negotiations on the chemical weapons Convention so that it may soon be possible for it to enter into force.

We support the widespread reduction in military budgets, general disarmament prohibition of the dumping of radioactive wastes, and transparency in agreements and operations relating to weapons.

In order to ensure strong development, collective security and cooperation among nations, confidence-building measures must include the peaceful, just and timely settlement of questions inherited from the part.

In the opinion of my delegation, the General Assembly should place greater emphasis on controlling the indiscriminate transfer of conventional weapons, unlawful trafficking in such weapons, related activities.

Although we are familiar with the devastating effects of devices that have caused the death of millions in recent conflicts, conventional weapons nevertheless continue to pose a serious threat to the countries represented here.

Bolivia, as a responsible member of the community of nations, is determined to contribute to the elimination of the illicit arms trade, through the implementation of legal measures on the domestic level aimed at implementing initiatives and provisions on the subject deriving from the competent bodies and relevant agreements.

My delegation considers it a matter of priority at this session in the General Assembly to deal with all matters relating to the removal of land-mines and to the imposition of a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel mines.

Last June — on behalf of the Governments of Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Venezuela and Bolivia, all members of the Cartagena Agreement — we submitted a concrete proposed for the establishment of the special trust fund called for in General Assembly resolution 48/7. The proposal by Andean countries, as set forth in document A/49/357/Add.1, reflects our concern regarding the seriousness of the problems of mines, the indiscriminate use and proliferation of which are clearly an obstacle to security and development.

At the regional level, Bolivia is proud to be part of the Latin American family which, from its own convictions, has created a truly nuclear-free zone. In this way, our region has made a concrete contribution to international peace. Hence, Bolivia supports the efforts that other regions are making to become nuclear-weapon-free zones. Nevertheless, we believe that efforts to ensure a world free from this terrible threat to humanity must receive the speedy support of the international community as a whole, and especially of those States that possess nuclear weapons.

The Government of Bolivia is convinced that we must redouble our efforts to convert or redirect material, financial and human resources towards non-military purposes.

Such a reorientation of efforts will help to promote the progress of mankind. It will help to resolve the urgent social problems of our day, in particular the growing and widespread poverty of the third world.

Progress in scientific research and the available means shared be put to higher uses rather than to mass destruction or war.

We are in favour of life; we are not in favour of death caused by irrationality, hatred or the mistakes of just a few.

These are the basic principles that will guide the delegation of Bolivia in the Committee.

Mr. Ayewah (Nigeria): Mr. Chairman, the Nigerian delegation is pleased to see you presiding over the affairs of the First Committee at the current session of the General Assembly. Your election is a tribute to you and to your great country, Ecuador. We are confident that with your diplomatic skills, our deliberations will be fruitful. We pledge our full support in ensuring a successful outcome of our work under your leadership. We also congratulate the other officers of the Committee, and wish them a successful tenure in office.

We seize this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to your predecessor, Ambassador Adolf von Wagner of Germany, for the admirable manner in which he guided the work of the Committee during the forty-eighth session. His untiring efforts in relation to the rationalization of the Committee's work are already yielding fruit — in the pattern of the debate and structure of our work during the current session. We look forward to further progress in that area in order to make the Committee respond more appropriately to the challenges of our time.

In a few months we shall be marking the fiftieth anniversary of our Organization. It will be a time for taking stock and for charting the course towards peace and collective security, which must of necessity include the harnessing of existing finite resources for development and the progress of all mankind.

It would be a great achievement for the Organization to be able to say that there is irreversible progress towards the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction; that within the framework of the disarmament agenda of the United Nations, we have been able to reach agreement on the use of technology mainly for peaceful purposes and on the norms for its transfer to developing economies; and, that we have established internationally accepted standards for the production and transfer of conventional weapons. Sadly, this will not be so by 1995. However, we can at this session of the General Assembly adopt a forward-looking disarmament agenda for the period beyond 1995 in which priority is given to these objectives.

In the view of my Government, the elimination of nuclear weapons should be the primary objective of the international community in the field of disarmament. The world must not seek to differentiate between weapons of mass destruction in its efforts to eliminate them. We must move to ban the production and use of these weapons and ultimately to eliminate them.

The decision to be taken at the 1995 Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons is crucial, in that it will indicate whether we are going to make progress or retrogress in the nuclear disarmament agenda, and whether we are going to strengthen the non-proliferation regime or weaken it.

It should not be taken for granted that the year 1995 offers an opportunity to consolidate the non-proliferation Treaty through an unconditional and indefinite extension. An unconditional and indefinite extension of the Treaty is clearly the easiest way to weaken the nuclear non-proliferation regime because of the inequities of the obligations assumed by the parties and the discriminatory structure of the Treaty. To suggest that indefinite extension of the Treaty is the only option available to parties could be an exercise in disinformation. The possible options provided for in the Treaty should be made clear to States parties, so that they can then take an objective and informed decision. For this reason, the Nigerian delegation would like to see the General Assembly adopt a resolution that will sensitize States parties to the important decision ahead, in order that they may be able to begin, in their various capitals, to give careful consideration to the import of article X, paragraph 2, of the Treaty. In this regard, we would like a clear legal interpretation of this article, an interpretation devoid of prejudice, subjectivity and high politicization. In addition, my delegation would like to say that forcing an inappropriate decision on extension through manipulation of procedure may well backfire and become costly to progress in disarmament in general.

Other factors that will contribute to the success of the 1995 Conference on the non-proliferation Treaty are: the achievement of a comprehensive ban on nuclear-test explosions; a ban on the production of fissile materials for weapons purposes and their vectors; and a multilaterally negotiated, legally binding instrument on negative security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty. Requests for these measures are as old as the non-proliferation Treaty itself. Besides the fact that these are legitimate requests, the current international climate favours and enables these measures. Furthermore, there is a need to strike a balance between the safeguards role of the

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its activities in the area of the transfer of nuclear technology and other promotional activities, so that the "Atoms for Peace" vision behind the non-proliferation Treaty may be fully realized.

Still on the issue of nuclear disarmament, a new and growing concern is the reported illicit traffic in nuclear materials, which negates the nuclear non-proliferation regime. It is in the interests of the international community to address this concern in an effective manner.

In the past three years the General Assembly has adopted three widely supported resolutions on transparency in armaments, establishing the United Nations Register of Conventional Weapons and recommending consideration of the further development of the Register and the early expansion of its scope to include further categories of equipment and data on military holdings and procurement through national production. The Nigerian delegation is disappointed that the group of governmental experts that met in 1994 to look into this matter was not able to agree on an expansion of the Register as recommended. Every effort should be made to see that the Register achieves the set objectives of full transparency in all types of armaments, and in both transfers and national holdings, in order to enhance its credibility and to keep Member States committed to reporting to the Register.

In 1990 the General Assembly adopted, by consensus, resolution 45/62 A entitled "Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade". The Declaration deals essentially with the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of the world for lasting peace and security. It recognized the determination of the international community to make progress in the 1990s by resolutely pursuing disarmament along with other efforts necessary for attaining genuine peace and security. It stated that the United Nations would continue to foster multilateral cooperation for disarmament, wherein bilateral and regional efforts could be complementary and mutually supportive in attaining the purposes and principles of its Charter.

We are now at the middle of the Decade and there have been great changes, both positive and negative, since that Declaration. My delegation believes that the international community needs to appraise and review the achievements in the field of disarmament in the light of the proposed objectives in the Declaration and, if need be, adapt its elements to the priority issues of the post-cold-war era. Just as we did at the 1985 session of the Disarmament Commission in respect of the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade, we wish to propose the inclusion in the agenda of the Disarmament Commission, while still in the middle of the 1990s, of an item entitled "Review of the Declaration of the 1990s as the Third Disarmament Decade".

Before concluding, my delegation would like to express its satisfaction with the progress made in the drafting of the treaty on the African nuclear-weapon-free zone. We look forward to the early conclusion of the treaty and its adoption by concerned members of the international community. In anticipation of this positive development, and taking advantage of the full entry into force of the Treaty of Tlatelolco in Latin America, member States of the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic adopted a unanimous declaration on the denuclearization of the South Atlantic during their third meeting in Brasilia, Brazil, last month. This development should thus make a large area of the globe denuclearized, and enable the developing countries in that region to devote their energies and resources to development for the benefit of their populations, and thus contribute to the goal of international peace and security. In the same manner, we wish to encourage the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones in the Middle East and in South Asia.

Finally, the Nigerian delegation would like to draw attention to the problems of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa. This Centre needs to be revitalized through the provision to it of resources, both human and material, so that it can perform the role for which it was established, namely, to sensitize and educate African public opinion with regard to the issues of disarmament and the building of confidence among States, as well as the peaceful resolution of disputes and development.

Mr. Eteffa (Ethiopia): Mr. Chairman, I should like to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau warmly on your election to guide us in our deliberations in the First Committee of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. My delegation is confident that we will reach a successful and fruitful conclusion under your chairmanship. We assure you of our cooperation and support.

For the last few years we have been congratulating ourselves, declaring the end of the cold war and welcoming the new relaxed and positive international political climate. We have been relatively at ease in our bilateral, regional and international interactions resulting from the positive developments prevailing in the international relations of

States. However, we are still far from reaching our expectations, in view of the emergence of new forms of challenges to international peace and security. Despite the tremendous achievements in the fields of both disarmament and international security, we still face formidable challenges that need to be addressed without further delay. A threat to peace somewhere is, as we always say, a threat to peace and security everywhere.

The recent tragedies in Rwanda, the relatively improved but unresolved situation of Somalia, the conflicts in the former Yugoslavia and other tragic events expressed in various forms are lessons which tell us that there are always unforeseen but intolerable circumstances posing a threat to centuries of human civilization. Our endeavours to embark on economic and social development after the end of the East-West confrontation are being replaced by efforts to address the symptoms of world disorder in different parts of the globe. Our Organization is currently spending more than $3 billion a year to run the day-to-day activities of the United Nations peace-keepers deployed in the various trouble spots of the world. All these situations send us the message that more political will and commitment are needed to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security. Some of the efforts under way at both the regional and the international level seem to be encouraging.

My delegation welcomes the signing of the Agreement on Gaza and Jericho on 4 May 1994 by the Government of Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO). The bold measures taken by Jordan and Israel in signing the Washington Declaration of 25 July 1994 deserve our warmest appreciation. These positive developments are basic elements in effectively addressing the protracted problems of the Middle East.

In accordance with the Declaration on the Denuclearization of Africa adopted by the Organization of African Unity in 1964 and the various resolutions of the General Assembly, the Group of Experts to Prepare a Draft Treaty on an African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone has produced fruitful results. We warmly welcome the draft text of an African nuclear-weapon-free zone treaty adopted at Addis Ababa and we call for its timely adoption. Such a successful outcome — after years of ongoing negotiations in our endeavours to establish nuclear-weapons-free zones — is an achievement not only for the continent of Africa, but also for the whole world. The final text of the treaty before us can be cited as one of our major successes in the post-cold-war period.

Although the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development held in 1986 entrusted the United Nations with a specific mandate for addressing the concerns emanating from the relationship between disarmament and development, the action programme adopted by consensus seems to be far from being implemented. We should once again stress the symbiotic relationship between disarmament and development on the one hand and security and development on the other. One of the recent slogans is that development is peace. But we have failed to convince ourselves that we must overcome the challenges of development, which are, in fact, the root causes of many of the troubles disturbing our planet, and we have failed to commit ourselves to the task. We are encouraged to see the "Agenda for Peace" complemented by the "Agenda for Development". We look forward to the simultaneous implementation of the proposals contained in the United Nations peace and development agendas and in line with globally agreed principles.

The failure of the United Nations Disarmament Commission at its 1994 substantive session to issue clear guidelines and recommendations with regard to nuclear disarmament and to the role of science and technology in the context of disarmament is indicative of the fact that we have a long way to go in order to bridge the gap.

Our optimism is further challenged by the lack of consensus in the deliberations at the third meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference on the non-proliferation Treaty, which was held at Geneva from 12 to 16 September 1994. We firmly believe that the non-proliferation Treaty is one of the most important international instruments prohibiting as it does the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The need for its extension cannot be questioned. It is my delegation's view that indefinite extension should be pursued if complementary actions are taken in other areas of nuclear disarmament.

In this regard, we are concerned with the lack of progress in the Conference on Disarmament on the negotiations for a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty and a cut-off of the production of fissionable materials for nuclear weapons. Ensuring the common and peaceful uses of nuclear technology and providing effective and verifiable security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States will undoubtedly help to bridge the gap that impedes progress in nuclear disarmament. We support the initiatives and the initial steps taken by France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States for the suspension of nuclear tests.

The continued presence of anti-personnel land-mines needs our urgent attention since the threat posed by those less-visible devices is a concern that can never be overlooked. Today, there are approximately 85 million of such devices scattered throughout the world. This makes the ratio of anti-personnel land-mines one to every 50 persons, and those most affected by those hidden weapons are civilians. We look forward to concrete and practical commitment by the international community to render unreserved assistance in mine clearance. Our endeavours to curb the deadly threat posed by anti-personnel land-mines should also be extended to the prohibition of their use, production, stockpiling and distribution.

In conclusion, I should like to emphasize that we should be mindful of the lost decades in which there was no effective progress in disarmament and development. Now that East-West confrontation has given way to mutual understanding and cooperation, we should be able to seize this historic opportunity to the advantage of mankind. We should spare no effort to bridge our differences and maximize our common endeavours. Together, we can easily make a difference for the benefit of present and future generations.

Mr. Baichorau (Belarus) (*interpretation from Russian*): The delegation of the Republic of Belarus would like to congratulate you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to your very responsible post. We are sure that under your guidance the First Committee will work effectively.

The fundamental approach of the Republic of Belarus to resolving the problems of disarmament and international security is formulated in it new Constitution, which was adopted by the Supreme Soviet in March 1994. Article 18 of the Constitution states that the foreign policy of the Republic of Belarus shall be built upon the principles of equality of nations, the non-use of force or the threat of force, the inviolability of borders, the peaceful settlement of disputes, non-interference in the internal affairs and other recognized principles and norms of international law. The aim of the Republic of Belarus is to make its territory a nuclear-free and neutral State. Belarus is taking up the practical tasks of its foreign policy in accordance with those constitutional foundation.

As a European State, Belarus is a full-fledged participant in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and is seeking to become a member of the Council of Europe and to conclude partnership agreements with the European countries and regional organizations.

Belarus is also prepared to support and comprehensively strengthen the role of the United Nations as the body primarily responsible for preserving international peace and security. We cannot underestimate the United Nations role in the localization and settlement of the armed conflicts which are breaking out on practically every continent. The Republic of Belarus will actively participate in the efforts of the United Nations to prevent such conflicts.

History has known of States that have become nuclear Powers, but until the decision taken by the Belarus parliament in February 1993 to ratify the strategic-arms-limitation (START) Treaty and to accede to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, there has not been a single country that has renounced its nuclear status and become a non-nuclear State.

The Republic of Belarus believes that the April 1995 Review Conference on the non-proliferation Treaty could and should result in the indefinite extension of that Treaty. We would like all States Members of the United Nations to become parties to the Treaty. To ensure that, the five nuclear Powers should give additional security guarantees to non-nuclear States, within the Treaty framework. Security assurances could be also provided the non-nuclear countries in the form of a Security Council resolution under which its permanent members would assume the obligation, in the event of nuclear aggression, to take adequate measures to protect the security of the non-nuclear States. In addition, the Republic of Belarus welcomes further steps towards the elimination of nuclear-missile armaments, a process in which all the nuclear Powers should join. As it was stated by the Prime Minister of Belarus, His Excellency Mikhail Chygir, in his address to the United Nations General Assembly, our country has expressed its solidarity with the proposal of the Russian Federation to draw up a treaty on nuclear security and strategic stability.

The Republic of Belarus was one of the initiators of the proposal to convene the Special Conference in Geneva to strengthen the regime of the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological and Toxin Weapons. We support the creation of an inspection regime under that Convention. However, we believe it would not be right to impose in this connection any financial burden on the inspecting States.

The Republic of Belarus has signed the Convention on the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the Treaty on Open Skies. Belarus is ready to participate in international non-proliferation regimes, to declare a moratorium on the export of anti-personnel mines, to facilitate the rapid

conclusion of a comprehensive test-ban Treaty and to work actively in other fields of arms control.

In this connection we would like to draw the attention of other delegations to the need to adopt, as soon as possible, a scheme to expand the membership of the Geneva Conference on Disarmament, as proposed by Ambassador O'Sullivan, following thorough preparatory work and multilateral consultations. The admission of new members could make the membership of the Conference on Disarmament more representative and its decisions more universally acceptable.

It is well known that the main international treaties in the field of arms control — the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the Convention on the Prohibition of Biological Weapons, the chemical weapons Convention and others — were drawn up in the years of the cold war, an era of rigid military, political and ideological confrontation. Total mutual mistrust was essentially the international context in which they were prepared. It seems that the time is ripe to begin to adapt these treaties to the new geostrategic realities, in which cooperation has replaced confrontation. A number of procedures envisaged in the disarmament treaties should be reconsidered and simplified. Belarus intends to continue to pursue a predictable and civilized policy in the field of arms control.

However, it seems to us that, so far, the contribution of Belarus to the process of disarmament and the strengthening of international security has not been fully appreciated. Our country has to reform and radically reduce the biggest army — in proportion to its population — in Europe: until recently, Belarus had one serviceman per 43 inhabitants. Under the provisions of the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE), Belarus, with its 10 million inhabitants, has to eliminate the armaments and military equipment of an area containing the most powerful military concentration of tanks anywhere in the former Soviet Union. In quantitative terms, this greatly surpasses the armaments elimination programmes of the leading Western countries. The Government of the Republic of Belarus does not intend ever to violate its obligations under these treaties, but sometimes a situation can develop in such a way that the institution in charge of, for example, eliminating military equipment is simply unable for financial and economic reasons to continue its work. We are grateful to several industrially developed countries that have assisted Belarus in solving serious problems connected with the implementation of the CFE Treaty. However, the disproportionate burden that has been placed on our country in the field of disarmament may become simply too much for our national economy, which is experiencing major difficulties during this transitional period.

In conclusion, I should like to recall that representatives of the Republic of Belarus have more than once spoken in the United Nations about the possibility and the necessity of creating a nuclear-free zone in Central and Eastern Europe from the Baltic to the Black Sea. Since 1990, when this idea was first put forward, all intermediate- and short-range nuclear missiles have been withdrawn from the territory of Belarus. The last intercontinental ballistic missile will leave our territory by the end of 1996. Corresponding steps in this direction are being taken by Ukraine. Recent developments in that region convince us that it is high time to move this issue from the stage of discussion to the stage of the initiation of practical steps to create such a zone.

Mr. Muthaura (Kenya): Let me join the representatives who have spoken before me in congratulating you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee. In congratulating you and the other members of the Bureau, I wish to take this opportunity to assure you of Kenya's full cooperation and support as we deliberate on the Committee's agenda.

This Committee is meeting at a time when we should collectively reflect on and re-evaluate the global changes that have recently taken place in the field of disarmament and international security. It is quite evident that with the end of the cold war we have witnessed some positive developments in this field: notably the substantial progress towards nuclear disarmament by the United States and the Russian Federation, the commencement by the Conference on Disarmament of substantive negotiations with a view to the conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty and the opening of the process for the signature and ratification of the Convention on the Development, Prohibition, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction.

Despite these positive developments, we face an increasing number of new challenges. Over the past year, the international community has witnessed an intensification of regional conflicts, which hinder international peace and security. The tragedy experienced in Rwanda remains unprecedented in the history of modern nations. The war in Bosnia-Herzegovina continues despite attempts by the international community to assist the parties involved in reaching a negotiated and long-lasting agreement. We note with concern that the problems in Somalia continue with no

real and tangible solutions on the horizon. The peace processes in Liberia and Sudan also continue to be evasive. We are encouraged, however, by the peace prospects in Burundi, Mozambique, Angola, Haiti, the Middle East and the Korean peninsula.

While acknowledging that the fundamental responsibility of ensuring peace and stability lies with individual countries, we stress that the international community has an important role to play by supporting these national efforts through the strengthening of democratic processes and the establishment of global programmes geared towards the alleviation of human degradation and the socio-political and economic problems experienced in many parts of the world, particularly in the developing countries. The attainment of global peace and security is intrinsically interwoven with the solution of the blistering poverty and indebtedness of the developing countries.

Most of the conflicts we are witnessing today confirm to us that security cannot be fragmented or viewed in a narrow or regional context but should be tackled through a genuinely comprehensive approach. Kenya shares the view that peace is not only the absence of war but the absence of any threat of war. We reaffirm our belief that security based on an anachronistic "deterrence" theory cannot guarantee world peace. The international community should therefore put into effect the system of security envisaged in the United Nations Charter, based on the legal and political foundations of the non-use of force, the peaceful settlement of disputes and collective action in the maintenance of international peace and security.

We believe that concrete measures of confidence and trust have to exist among nations in order for them to disarm and develop peacefully. The application of confidence-building measures and the maintenance of good relations with all countries are vital factors in eliminating barriers of mistrust and are priorities of Kenya's foreign policy. It is our view that the goal of confidence-building is to create mutual trust and favourable conditions for the enhancement of world disarmament, peace and security. The enhancement and application of confidence-building measures on regional and subregional levels are therefore an integral part of our global disarmament endeavour.

Kenya supports the establishment of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and views it as a mechanism designed to enhance confidence among States. It is expected that expanding the scope of the Register would allow it to develop into an important international confidence-building mechanism that would create a desired transparency both in international arms transfers and in national production of arms. Its objective should be the reduction of conventional armaments to the lowest possible level consistent with the legitimate security needs of States. While acknowledging the work and conclusions of the governmental group of experts charged with the responsibility of examining the possible expansion of the scope of the Register, my delegation is of the view that the Register should be expanded in such a manner as to ensure that those responsible for production and stockpiling have the same degree of obligation and commitment as those responsible for imports and exports. In other words, production and stockpiling should be institutionalized in the Register. There is no doubt in our minds that irresponsible trade in arms has been the main cause of the brutal and prolonged conflicts that continue to preoccupy the international community. Governments, individually and collectively, have a responsibility to regulate the arms trade. Towards that end, the United Nations should enhance its capability to monitor the activities of Member States in this area.

We wish to reiterate our conviction that regional and global disarmament are complementary and should be pursued simultaneously. It is in this regard that we support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones. We particularly welcome the progress made towards drafting a treaty on an African nuclear-weapon-free zone. We request that continued support be given in order to finalize the drafting of the treaty.

We are cognizant of the initiative for the establishment of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean and request that support be given to the Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean as it continues its task of addressing new alternative approaches to the achievement of the goals set forth in the Declaration as well as to its own future role. We welcome the increased participation of the members of the Ad Hoc Committee at its last session and hope that the few major maritime Powers that are not active will resume their participation. With the emphasis on new alternative approaches, the objectives of the Ad Hoc Committee have been widened to cater for broader interests in regard to international peace and security during the post-cold-war era.

The non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) is an important instrument, one which should be used more effectively towards the promotion of international peace and security. The universal application of the Treaty should serve as the cornerstone of disarmament efforts aimed at the elimination

of all nuclear weapons. In that regard, maximum support should be given to the negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty that are taking place in the Conference on Disarmament. We acknowledge the role that the Treaty would play in strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We further welcome the continuing efforts of the President of the Amendment Conference of the States parties to the partial test-ban Treaty to ensure a complementary relationship between the forum and the Conference on Disarmament in the achievement of a multilateral comprehensive test-ban treaty.

Kenya subscribes to the view that a treaty banning the production and stockpiling of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices would be a significant contribution to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Such a treaty should, however, be non-discriminatory, effectively, verifiable and have universal application.

We are convinced that security guarantees to non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons can contribute positively to addressing some of the dangers inherent in the presence of nuclear weapons. An internationally binding convention should be reached on this issue.

The role of science and technology in the context of international security, disarmament and other related fields has to be re-emphasized. There is a need for improved modalities to guarantee the transfer and utilization of technology for peaceful purposes. Global efforts would require the development of mechanisms to facilitate multilateral cooperation in the promotion and diversion of military technology for peaceful purposes.

We welcome the increasing awareness among the international community of the positive role that science and technology can play in the verification of existing and future disarmament measures. Such applications of science and technology can contribute to confidence-building by providing the means to achieve greater transparency in military matters.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.